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Summary record of the 8th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 11 October 2016, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Drobnjak ..... (Croatia)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 58: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (*Territories not covered under other agenda items*) (*continued*) (A/71/23 (chap. XIII))

Draft resolution V: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, submitted under agenda item 58 (A/71/23 (chap. XIII))

1. *A recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Canada, China, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Czechia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia.

Against:

Côte d'Ivoire, Israel, Morocco, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Colombia, France.

2. *Draft resolution V was adopted by 130 votes to 5, with 2 abstentions.*

3. **Mr. Perry** (United Kingdom) said that his delegation continued to find some elements of the resolution unacceptable and had therefore once more voted against it. It nonetheless remained committed to modernizing its relationship with its Overseas Territories while taking fully into account the views of the people of those Territories.

4. **Mr. Mazzeo** (Argentina) said that visiting missions could be sent only to Territories to which the right of self-determination applied, meaning Territories where there was no dispute over sovereignty. That requirement was fully in line with General Assembly resolution 850 (IX), which also established the requirement that any visiting mission must be approved by the General Assembly. It was also in line with the practice of the Special Committee, as evidenced in its regional seminars and declarations that visiting missions must be sent on a case-by-case basis and carried out in compliance with relevant United Nations resolutions.

5. **Ms. Patel** (United States of America) said that her delegation fully supported the right to self-determination but had voted against the draft resolution because it remained concerned by the fact that the Special Committee continued to call for the independence of certain Territories, irrespective of the will of the people in those Territories. While joining the consensus on Territory-specific resolutions, as in previous years, the United States nevertheless called on the Special Committee to respect the right of a Territory's people freely to choose its political status in relation to the administering State, including when a Territory chose to be in free association with, or integrate into, that State.

6. **Ms. Pedros Carretero** (Spain) said that her delegation had voted in favour of the resolution on the basis of its support for the principle of self-determination. In cases involving a sovereignty

dispute, however, such as in that of Gibraltar, it was the principle of territorial integrity that applied, taking into account in particular General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), paragraph 6, and General Assembly resolution 2353 (XXII). She reiterated that visiting missions could be dispatched only to Territories where the right to self-determination was at stake and only with General Assembly approval, which was indeed the practice followed by the Special Committee.

Agenda item 48: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (A/71/20 and A/C.4/71/L.2)

7. **The Chair**, introducing the item, said that there were substantial links between the main pillars of the pivotal 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the potential challenges to the security and sustainability of outer space activities, and the global challenges to humanity and planet Earth. In seeking collectively to secure the future use of space assets in the interest of sustainable development, the planet Earth and its near-Earth environment as a whole, the international community must remain mindful of the outstanding role of space science and technology applications in a wide range of areas relating to, among others, poverty eradication, biodiversity and disaster management. The Sustainable Development Goals provided a unique opportunity for reflection on the future role of space exploration, science and technology as indispensable tools for addressing global challenges. In short, development, sustainability and space security went hand in hand in the process of forming global space governance for the benefit of all humanity.

8. **Ms. Di Pippo** (Director, United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs), presenting an exhibition catalogue containing spectacular images of Earth from space that had been circulated to delegations in the room, said that the exhibition, "My planet from space: fragility and beauty", had recently been organized at United Nations Headquarters by her Office and the European Space Agency with the aim of emphasizing both the beauty and the fragility of the planet and the need to protect it. In addition to spreading that core message, the images in the catalogue demonstrated the vital contribution that space technology could make towards successful implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Reduction 2015-2013, the Paris Agreement governing climate change and the Sustainable Development Goals through its ability to monitor activities on Earth.

9. **Mr. Kendall** (Canada), speaking in his capacity as Chair of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) and introducing the report of its fifty-ninth session (A/71/20), expressed a warm welcome to the six new States members of the Committee, which had also endorsed another membership application, and said that the growing COPUOS membership confirmed both the increasing importance attached to cooperation in outer space affairs, including in connection with indigenous and collaborative space assets, and the legitimacy of COPUOS as the key forum for international cooperation in the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space for the benefit of humanity, in accordance with the ever-pertinent General Assembly resolution 1472 (XIV) adopted in 1959. Rapid and dramatic changes in the utilization, exploration and exploitation of outer space for peaceful purposes had, however, added complexity and unforeseen challenges to the Committee's work, resulting in the need for greater compromise and collegiality in order for progress to be made in some of the more difficult negotiations on issues relating to the Committee's mandate. Significant positive dialogue had indeed been achieved as a result of the collegial approach adopted in working for constructive and consensual solutions to those issues, with discussions invariably focused on providing substantive input, improving the safety and security of the space environment and assisting all States to benefit from the utilization of space, irrespective of their stage of economic, scientific or technical development.

10. The Committee had identified seven thematic priorities for use as guidance in developing the agenda for the observance of the fiftieth anniversary of the first United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, UNISPACE+50, to be held in 2018, which would provide an opportunity for assessing the current status and charting the future role of COPUOS and the Office as important players in the area of global space governance. Those priorities were: global partnership in space exploration and innovation; the current and future legal regime of outer space and global space governance; enhanced information exchange on space objects and events; the international framework for space weather services; strengthened

space cooperation for global health; international cooperation towards low-emission and resilient societies; and capacity-building for the twenty-first century.

11. In that overall context, space exploration and innovation would continue to be essential drivers in opening up new domains in space science and technology, triggering other sectors to partner with the space sector in the development of new joint research and development initiatives. With partnerships and capabilities developed through space exploration creating new opportunities for addressing global challenges, it was essential to enhance capacity-building and strengthen partnerships between established spacefaring States and emerging space nations. Outer space was nevertheless also a fragile environment easily affected by the broader applications of space operations and the increased strategic value of space, which called for measures to improve its safety, security and sustainability, by such means as more robust information exchange and notification procedures on space objects and events, including risk reduction efforts.

12. The cross-cutting elements of various parallel initiatives would need to be studied to that end, as well as in order to protect an already fragile near-Earth space environment, expand the role of space and technology applications in meeting the growing challenges to humanity, societal development and Earth itself, and connect to established transparency and confidence-building mechanisms and platforms so as to make space operations more sustainable. For its part, the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs stood ready to assist in the development of additional mechanisms for the enhancement of information exchange and notification procedures, predominantly with respect to orbital data and information, by building on the existing treaty-based platform it maintained for that purpose, which included the Register of Objects Launched into Outer Space.

13. Taking into account the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, he said that global development would not only continue its reliance on the use of space tools but would also call for the long-term sustainability of space-related activities and the outer space environment, free from conflict and for the common benefit of all humanity, with the interrelationship and dialogue between major spacefaring nations and emerging space nations as fundamental prerequisites. Indeed, the evolution and success of international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space continued to provide impetus for future international processes and infrastructures relating to space cooperation and coordination mechanisms at the international, regional, interregional and national levels.

14. In the light of the cross-cutting issues that would ultimately strengthen the common space endeavour at the United Nations, and given the opportunity provided by UNISPACE+50 to sharpen the shared vision on that score, he suggested various avenues for consideration, such as: increasing the COPUOS membership so as to strengthen cooperation between spacefaring and emerging space nations from all geographical regions and promoting the universality of United Nations treaties on outer space, by encouraging their ratification by all COPUOS members; further developing ongoing dialogue on space-related activities with international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations that had permanent observer status with the Committee and building on the Committee's close relationship with regional and interregional coordination mechanisms; strengthening the role of the Office in supporting the orderly conduct of space activities and in advancing capacity-building for all nations, in particular developing countries; enhancing coordination and dialogue between COPUOS and its Subcommittees in order to strengthen their common output in the interest of all nations; and supporting the recommendation of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities by encouraging active and substantive dialogue between the First and Fourth Committees of the General Assembly on addressing challenges relating to space security and sustainability.

15. It was greatly satisfying that the Committee and its Subcommittees continued to demonstrate their collective abilities to discuss, debate and actively formulate in a collegial manner ideas, resolutions and agendas pertaining to contemporary and future matters of critical importance to the world's populations, providing the backbone of UNISPACE+50 and beyond. As a result, the fundamental processes related to an international response to the near-Earth object impact

threat had been established; attention was being focused on global health and space weather; and new items on legal aspects of space traffic management, the application of international law to small satellite activities, and potential models for activities in exploration, exploitation and utilization of space resources, were providing incentives for important exchanges of views. Annexed to the Committee's report, the first set of draft Guidelines on the long-term sustainability of outer space activities represented a milestone achievement in a process set to continue over the coming two years towards a more comprehensive set of proposed guidelines. In the busy years ahead, UNISPACE+50 was simply the beginning of more inclusive space governance that, as part of the collective efforts to reshape the global space dialogue, would strengthen space economy, space society, space accessibility and space diplomacy.

16. **Ms. Krisnamurthi** (Indonesia), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that outer space must be used and explored for exclusively peaceful purposes, strictly for the benefit of all countries, irrespective of the degree of their development, and in accordance with international law and the principle of the non-appropriation of outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies. International cooperation was essential to the furtherance of space activities aimed at improving human lives. Space technology and its applications were indispensable in providing viable solutions to many development challenges and helping to realize the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and ASEAN therefore encouraged COPUOS to pursue its efforts to those ends.

17. Given the vulnerability of South-East Asia to natural disaster, ASEAN attached high importance to the role of space-based technologies in furnishing valuable data that enhanced disaster risk preparedness, response and mitigation capacities, a role that was indeed recognized in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. Capacity-building must be provided, however, to help developing countries reap the full benefit of such technologies. ASEAN also supported efforts aimed at strengthening the governance framework for outer space on the basis of a transparent and all-inclusive governmental process, within the United Nations ambit, and with full respect for the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and equal access for all States. All must work intensively to prevent the possibility of an arms race in outer space while, for its part, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee must pursue its discussion of measures for mitigating the serious risks posed by space debris, which should include voluntary implementation of the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines of COPUOS.

18. Steps taken by ASEAN to forge closer regional cooperation in the field of space technology included its support for the establishment of the ASEAN Regional Training Centre for Space Technology and Applications, the main objectives of which were to increase space capacity-building among ASEAN nations, share common facilities in space technology and relevant applications, and build a shared platform for technology transfer, knowledge enhancement and human resources development. ASEAN had also hosted a number of regional and international conferences and workshops on outer space and would remain actively focused on exploring and harnessing the peaceful uses of outer space.

19. Speaking in her national capacity, she underscored the significance of General Assembly resolution 70/82 on international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space, with particular reference to paragraphs 12 and 13, and such cooperation had to be fully inclusive by providing support to developing countries. It was also important to assess obstacles to the implementation of space law, and all countries must therefore continue to participate in the deliberations aimed at reaching a consensus on the definition and delimitation of outer space. Equitable access to the geostationary-satellite orbit should furthermore be guaranteed to all States, taking into account the special needs of the developing countries and the geographical situation of particular countries.

20. She expressed appreciation for the tireless efforts to find compromise solutions with a view to finalizing the draft Guidelines on the long-term sustainability of outer space activities and described the Indonesian contribution to various processes in the area of outer space utilization, including through workshops on the use of space-based information in emergency response situations and of multi-global navigation satellite systems (GNSS). Indonesia had recently launched its third low-Earth orbit microsatellite and would continue

working to ensure that outer space was used peacefully and solely for the betterment of all humanity.

21. **Ms. Yánez Loza** (Ecuador), expressing full support for the work of COPUOS and emphasizing the crucial importance of international cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes, said that industrialized countries must pool their resources to facilitate the implementation of space application programmes in developing countries, for solidarity as well had to be globalized. In cataloguing the human and economic consequences of the natural disasters to which her country and others were particularly vulnerable, she also expressed continuing support for the United Nations Platform of Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER), now in its tenth year of operation, and urged the Office to intensify its related capacity-building activities in vulnerable countries so as to facilitate their disaster mitigation, rescue and prevention efforts. She noted, too, the emphasis given in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Reduction to the role of space-based technology and Earth observation in disaster management and emergency response.

22. The work of COPUOS should include a significant focus on the promotion of space technologies in the context of sustainable development, notably with the aim of supporting global health for the public good and strengthening space community initiatives for achievement of the 2030 Agenda. In that context, the United Nations Programme on Space Applications should give priority to such areas as environmental protection, natural resources management, satellite-based distance learning and telemedicine, disaster risk reduction, GNSS and space law.

23. In Ecuador, the use of space technologies was central to the protection of food sovereignty and had helped the Ecuadorian Space Institute develop forecast models for assessing the impact of climate change on staple crops. Another priority for Ecuador was to ensure equitable access to and use of the geostationary-satellite orbit, and COPUOS must continue to try to define a legal framework in that area, but without excluding the possible adoption of a related international regime that would take into account the special needs of the developing countries and the geographical situation of particular countries, in accordance with article 44, paragraph 2, of the Constitution of the International Telecommunication Union. Her Government, in its commitment to the use and exploration of outer space for peaceful purposes emphasized the treaty-based principles of universal and equal access to outer space, without discrimination, and the non-appropriation of outer space.

24. International space law must be further developed in order to prevent the militarization and weaponization of outer space and thus ensure its use for peaceful purposes in the interest of improving life on Earth. To that end, UNISPACE+50 would provide the opportunity to examine compliance with international regulations on the use of outer space in the light of such universally accepted principles as the prohibition of the use or threat of force, which was crucial to forestalling an arms race in outer space and the grave danger it would pose to international peace and security.

25. **Mr. García Moritán** (Argentina) said that his Government recognized the sovereign right of all States to participate in the exploration and use of outer space for exclusively peaceful purposes that benefited human development. It was therefore firmly committed to the principles laid down in that regard, in particular those concerning equal access to outer space for all, without discrimination or regard for degrees of development; non-appropriation of outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, by any State under any pretext; non-militarization of outer space and its use, as the common heritage of humanity, strictly for enhancing living conditions and peace on Earth; and regional and international cooperation in the development of space activities.

26. Greater cooperation for capacity-building was indeed fundamental to enabling developing countries in particular to benefit from the scientific, environmental, medical and educational advances achieved through space activities and the use of space technology. Such cooperation also promoted the exchange of knowledge and good practices, created synergies and increased awareness of the benefits of space activities. Respect for the instruments and laws in place to prevent an arms race in outer space was similarly crucial, and welcome progress on the peaceful uses of outer space had been accomplished by

the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities. The development of clear terminology was vital to the message that the weaponization of outer space was unlawful.

27. In view of the growing use of outer space, other aspects meriting close follow-up included the saturation of the geostationary orbit, debris management and the use of nuclear energy in low-Earth orbits. The issue of the long-term sustainability of outer space activities, however, must under no circumstances be used by established spacefaring nations as an argument for placing restrictions on emerging space nations legitimately working to develop and use space technology in order to improve living standards for their citizens. Space tools, furthermore, played an increasing role in disaster prevention, management and mitigation, as well as in water resources management and climate change mitigation. Technological progress and the involvement of new private actors had enormously accelerated the exploration and use of outer space, making it urgent for COPUOS to be creative in taking up new topics for discussion, in conjunction with the various other forums dealing with outer space issues.

28. **Mr. Gat** (Israel) said that, notwithstanding its domestic challenges, his country had been actively involved in outer space issues from the outset, prioritizing the development of its scientific capacities and know-how to take it to the forefront of innovation, technology and research in that inspiring realm. It saw space as a technological stimulus and the key to a modern society, an advanced information-based economy and the recruitment of highly-skilled professionals. The Israeli Space Agency thus aspired to preserve and extend the country's advantages and place it among the elite of spacefaring nations.

29. Free of borders and territorial divisions, space offered the opportunity to overcome differences and to learn from reciprocal experiences through cooperation leading to heightened understanding, tolerance and indeed global progress. For its part as a COPUOS member, Israel looked forward to enhancing its collaboration in such areas as space systems and subsystems, space science and exploration, Earth observation, communication and navigation. Its commitment to scientific excellence had furthermore encouraged Israeli researchers and private entrepreneurs to work together in exploring the uses of outer space. To that end, Israel had a space-launch capability and numerous active satellites in operation.

30. He outlined some of the milestones demonstrating the Israeli commitment to fulfilment of its space vision, which included the signing of instruments of formal cooperation with the Office, the hosting of international space-related conferences attended also by a number of Arab and Muslim delegations and the organization of a space exploration study programme for participants from across the globe. Cooperation agreements had also been signed with sister agencies by the Israeli Space Agency, which additionally continued to expand links with international partners and had sought to advance projects of benefit to the international community, including through the Israeli collaboration with UN-SPIDER, to which it provided scientific and Earth observation imagery, and the Israeli membership in the Space Mission Planning Advisory Group, seeking ways to avert near-Earth object impact threats. The Israeli Government, moreover, stood ready to support the preparations for UNISPACE+50 and for the era of suborbital flights in cooperation with the International Civil Aviation Organization. It would likewise continue to cooperate with other countries and to encourage initiatives for promoting innovation with a view to improving the quality of life for Earth's inhabitants and the sustainability of their shared planet.

31. **Mr. Díaz Ortega** (Mexico) said that his country's outer space policy was designed not only to further promote international cooperation for the exploration and use of outer space for exclusively peaceful purposes and for the benefit of humankind but also to enhance the related international legal regime. Indeed, Mexico advocated universal application of the five United Nations outer space treaties, to which it was itself a party, in the vital interest of building cooperation, transparency and confidence in the field of space-related activities. It thus called on all States that had not yet done so to ratify them.

32. An unfortunate 20-year paralysis had obstructed the negotiation of new measures for preventing an arms race in outer space, and multilateral negotiations were the way forward towards a new legally-binding international agreement embodying the principles of equity, viability and verification with the aim of

preserving outer space as the common heritage of humanity and prohibiting its use for military purposes. Important as they were, other means of complementing existing instruments and confidence-building and transparency measures were no substitute for such negotiations, because international security was indivisible and must not be compromised for the benefit of any one State or group of States.

33. The primary consideration was to ensure that outer space remained open for peaceful exploration, and for use by all States, in accordance with the legal principles set out in the relevant treaties. To that end, the placement of any arms in outer space, including all weapons of mass destruction, must be prohibited. COPUOS and its Subcommittees were unique platforms for strengthening space-related instruments globally in the service of sustainable development and in order to overcome contemporary challenges. It was consequently essential to develop new capacities and aim at greater coordination between COPUOS and other intergovernmental organizations.

34. **Mr. Lim** (Singapore) said that the growing global reliance on space utilization had brought with it such new challenges as space debris, orbital congestion and the threat of an arms race in outer space, which called for pragmatic measures to ensure responsible behaviour and security. In the United Nations context alone, spatial applications were crucial to enhancing the safety and security of peacekeepers and civilians; improving situational awareness and in turn enhancing the effectiveness of peacekeeping, humanitarian aid, disaster relief and disaster risk reduction operations; and monitoring the environmental footprint. An open and inclusive international framework for governing activities in outer space had to be developed and maintained as a peaceful global commons, and Singapore was committed to working for consensus on the norms required to that end.

35. As a party to three of the United Nations treaties on outer space, Singapore welcomed the proposals of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space as a means of advancing the discussions pertaining to a multilateral code of conduct and to capacity-building initiatives. It also welcomed the idea of more inclusive consultations within the COPUOS framework through the participation of non-Committee members and, with a view to facilitating substantive exchanges and improving synergies, it additionally looked forward to a repeat of the joint ad hoc meeting of the First and Fourth Committees held in 2015 to discuss possible challenges to space security and sustainability.

36. He described his country as a nascent player in the space domain, but the activities of its recently established Office for Space Technology and Industry already included four satellite launches from India in support of urban planning and disaster management across Southeast Asia, as well as active participation in an ASEAN regional workshop on space security and in negotiations organized by the European Union concerning the draft International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities. Singapore was also shortly due to co-host with the United States a workshop on space hazards, transparency and confidence-building measures for enhancing space security, a sign of its commitment to the regional and multilateral efforts to build international cooperation in the peaceful use of outer space.

37. **Mr. Steele** (New Zealand) said that his country was not currently a space-capable State but that, in 2016, the first commercial rocket was due to be launched into outer space from its territory by a New Zealand company. It was extremely serious about its responsibilities as a country hosting space launches and indeed its Parliament was currently considering a bill on the safe, secure and responsible operation of the country's developing space industry that would also ensure compliance with international space obligations. Already a party to three of the United Nations treaties on outer space, New Zealand had signalled its intention to accede to a fourth, the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space.

38. Given its reliance on assured access to space-based systems to support its economic prosperity and maintain public safety, New Zealand was clearly interested in working with international partners, including as a new member of COPUOS, to promote the responsible and peaceful use of space. It was particularly interested in the work of COPUOS and its Subcommittees in such areas as the long-term sustainability of outer space activities and the application of relevant international space law obligations to the space activities of private companies;

and looked forward to the opportunity to exchange expertise and make a valuable contribution.

39. **Mr. Ntsoane** (South Africa) said that, recognizing the potentially immense contribution of the peaceful use of outer space to sustainable development, his country wished to harness space system applications in order to promote economic growth, poverty reduction and knowledge creation. At the regional level, it cooperated with Kenya, Nigeria and Algeria in the operation of a constellation of low-Earth-orbiting satellites, representing a major feat for the African space industry insofar as the data and information collected would increase technological capacities across the continent.

40. At the global level, South Africa was committed to working for the development of international norms governing the use of outer space and consequently attached great importance to the work of COPUOS. Outer space was the heritage of all humankind, meaning that all States must benefit from its use. The principles of fairness, equal access and non-discrimination must accordingly remain central to any discussions concerning that use. In that context, he called for greater cooperation among States for building the capacity also of human resources in space-related matters.

41. **Ms. Abdullah** (Malaysia) said that her country had achieved progress in its space activities during 2016, notably in the field of space applications, which had been harnessed for use in grass-roots projects involving the use of geographical positioning system (GPS) signals. Describing three examples of such projects, she related that GPS signals were used in the first case to set virtual boundaries for managing the movement of autistic children; in the second case, to enable paramedics to locate the critically ill within the shortest possible time frame once the patient had pressed a triggering button; and in the third case, to help local authorities manage their municipalities by way of a smart service-delivery engine developed using geospatial technology.

42. Malaysia was also taking part in the Sentinel Asia initiative for applying remote sensing and online geographic information system (GIS) technologies in support of disaster management, to which end it received and analysed data from numerous satellites in the Asia-Pacific region. Under another cooperation initiative, likewise thanks to assistance from the Japanese Government, it played a leading role in two space biology research projects involving Asian seeds and herbs. Its National Space Agency had, furthermore, recently organized school programmes that had included a live telecommunication session with a Japanese astronaut on board the International Space Station. Since economic and technological development was increasingly dependent on space technology, the use and exploration of outer space as the common heritage of humankind must be pursued for exclusively peaceful purposes.

43. **Mr. Perren** (Switzerland), highlighting the unique role played by COPUOS as a global platform for governance and the all-vital international cooperation in space, said that the Committee's final approval of the first set of draft Guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities was the result of diligent work, the informed support of its Chair and the Secretariat, and a willingness to compromise. Continuation of that same constructive spirit and degree of flexibility would surely lead to the successful compilation of a full compendium of draft Guidelines for referral to the General Assembly in 2018.

44. Switzerland was involved in the expert groups dealing with two of the thematic priorities selected by the Committee for possible discussion during UNISPACE+50, namely, the international framework for space weather services, and strengthened space cooperation for global health, and it planned to host a workshop on the latter topic in 2017 with a view to strengthening synergies with the activities of Geneva-based organizations. It also looked forward to the establishment of an expert group on the thematic priority of enhanced information exchange on space objects and events, and echoed the calls for closer coordination between the two Subcommittees of COPUOS.

45. Without safety and security, the long-term sustainability of outer space activities could not be guaranteed. Switzerland therefore encouraged working together more productively in holistically addressing the sustainability, safety and security challenges in outer space activities, and welcomed the increased cooperation between the Office, the United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs and the United Nations

Institute for Disarmament Research. He expressed support for the organization of an interactive round table of the First and Fourth Committees at the current session in the hope that such an interchange would shape the coming stages of effective collaboration.

46. **Mr. Malik** (Pakistan), commending the role of COPUOS in facilitating a convergence of views on key scientific, technical and regulatory issues, said that space technologies had evolved dramatically and that outer space activities had moved beyond the realm of technological demonstration into pragmatic applications for national security and the socioeconomic uplift of the masses. It was important that there be more international cooperation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space, a greater utilization of space-based resources, and the sharing of experiences and expertise in the field of satellite-enabled applications, in particular for disaster risk reduction, management and mitigation. Pakistan was very involved in the work of the various international, regional and other space-related forums of which it was a member, while at the national level it was utilizing space-based resources to enhance its socioeconomic development through projects relating to, inter alia, disaster management support, crop mask development and forest resource assessment for emission reduction purposes.

47. Maintenance of the safety, security and sustainability of outer space was a collective responsibility entailing the vital goal of achieving the long-term sustainability of space activities, including through space debris mitigation. Emerging spacefaring nations, however, were mostly developing countries lacking in the financial and technical resources needed for full compliance with the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines of COPUOS and should therefore be provided with situational awareness and conjunction assessment risk analysis systems, as well as with assistance from advanced spacefaring nations for absorbing additional costs incurred as a result of spacecraft design modifications. To limit the access of new entrants to the spacefaring world by setting overly-high technical standards would be contrary to the provisions of the relevant treaties and General Assembly resolutions. Research, best practices, technologies and early warning information should also be made available to all stakeholders with a view to preventing space debris from compromising the harnessing of potential gains from outer space.

48. Pakistan had consistently opposed the militarization and weaponization of outer space, which would pose a grave threat to humanity and to the future of space operations, including by impeding progress towards their long-term sustainability. The failure of the current international legal regime to prohibit such weaponization should therefore be addressed in a legally-binding treaty on the subject. As a party to the five United Nations treaties on outer space, Pakistan supported the negotiations already under way in that domain and remained committed to the peaceful use of outer space, an area in which training and capacity-building for developing countries should be increased so as to provide access for all to the benefits.

49. **Mr. Maleki** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that, as a founding member of COPUOS, his country attached great importance to outer space as a common heritage of humankind and to its exploration and use by all States for peaceful purposes only as an inalienable right on the basis of equality and the principle of non-ownership. Outer space must also remain a non-military and weapon-free zone; the monopolization of space and space technology by the few must be avoided; and the science, technologies and applications for access to outer space must be made available to all, without discrimination.

50. It followed that cooperation must be freely extended to developing countries, including through the transfer of all space-related know-how as a tool for socioeconomic development, and that all States, irrespective of the degree of their development, must have access to the geostationary orbit. The definition and delimitation of outer space must furthermore be carefully considered and agreed by consensus. With its negative impact on the sustainable use of outer space, the worrying problem of space debris should also be urgently addressed, and primarily by those who created the debris, in line with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

51. In the development of its space programme, the Islamic Republic of Iran accorded high priority to international cooperation, particularly within the framework of COPUOS, where it had always made constructive contributions to the work in progress. A disaster-prone country, it was also an active partner of

UN-SPIDER and indeed hosted its Regional Support Office, in addition to which it was a founding member of the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization and cooperated widely on space-related matters with various regional and international organizations. His delegation was concerned, however, by the annexation of the first set of the draft Guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities to the COPUOS report as having been conclusively adopted by the Committee, which was a hasty and unprofessional action inconsistent with the usual practice followed in the case of matters still under discussion. All COPUOS members were entitled to propose amendments to draft guidelines until such time as they were finalized and presented as a whole to the General Assembly for possible adoption.

52. **Mr. Sukhee** (Mongolia) said that the number of countries engaged in space exploration and the use of space science and technologies for socioeconomic development called for more effective regional and international cooperation in the field. COPUOS and its Subcommittees played a crucial role in promoting efforts to further space exploration and research and in bringing the benefits of space technology to assist achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

53. Mongolia had long been committed to promoting the development and peaceful uses of space science and technology, having established its first space communication station in 1971 and seen its first astronaut accomplish a space mission in 1981. Nonetheless, it had never launched its own satellite and was therefore developing and localizing aerospace and satellite technology with the aim of achieving that goal in 2017 while simultaneously extending its cooperation with other countries. Once launched, the satellite would enable Mongolia to conduct independent space studies, capture geographic images, improve mapping and better prevent natural disasters. It would also enable country-wide access to low-cost wireless communication services and yield benefits for its development projects and programmes. Mongolia was actively cooperating with space-related organizations in the Asia-Pacific region and stood ready to work with COPUOS in preserving outer space for peaceful purposes only.

54. **Mr. Karem** (Iraq) said that the issue of space security was taking on more importance especially because outer space had become a hosting environment for advanced scientific, commercial and military activities. Outer space was an important resource for all, including non-spacefaring nations, in the light of the increasing contribution of space technology and science to, inter alia, navigation, meteorological observation and disaster management. His delegation therefore welcomed the United Nations focus on the development of legal frameworks for the use of outer space, notably through COPUOS, which was leading the joint efforts in such areas as strengthening international cooperation and transparency in order to prevent in-space collisions and curtail the generation of harmful space debris. The outer space treaties adopted by the United Nations, moreover, dealt with such matters as the common interest of all humanity in outer space, the use of outer space for the benefit of all peoples, and efforts to prevent the Moon becoming an area of international conflict, laying down the related principles and establishing the authority of the United Nations in that regard. The legal framework provided by the treaties was complemented by such instruments as the European Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities, which emphasized transparency and confidence-building measures as means for achieving space security.

55. International cooperation for the peaceful uses of outer space should be aimed at promoting the development of space science, technology and applications and at strengthening capacity-building, with COPUOS playing a key role as a forum for information exchange on related activities at the national and international levels. Thanks to assistance provided through such cooperation, Iraq had been able to launch its first satellite for scientific study purposes in 2014. It was now working to harness the benefits of the peaceful uses of outer space in the area of modern communications and technology, including by sending experts on training courses in developed countries, which would not only enhance its national capabilities but also strengthen cooperation and serve humanity as a whole.

56. Iraq stood firmly opposed to the militarization of outer space and to any other use of outer space that would have damaging consequences for humanity. It also reaffirmed the applicability of international law and the Charter of the United Nations in determining international liability for damage caused by space

objects. Taking into account the interest of future generations, including with respect to the key components of sustainable development, all States must provide information to the United Nations on their activities in outer space with a view to averting the possibility of catastrophic accidents with potentially negative repercussions for global peace.

57. **Mr. Prasad** (India) said that his country had achieved significant successes in the outer space field over the past year, which he illustrated by providing details of numerous launch vehicle and satellite missions completed for the purposes of Earth observation, communication and navigation with innovative operational systems. The Indian Mars Orbiter Mission had recently completed two years in the Martian orbit, working beyond its designed lifespan of six months and providing invaluable data for the scientific community on the Martian surface and atmosphere. Additional Earth observation and communication satellites were due to be launched in the coming months and the first developmental launch of a heavy-lift launch vehicle was planned for early 2017.

58. Advances in space technology and applications continued to be integrated into the country's national goals for development and good governance, while at the international level India had concluded formal instruments of cooperation with numerous countries, as well as with international organizations. Its cooperation with others included work on building a microwave remote sensing satellite and on launching joint satellite missions for Earth observation purposes. At the ASEAN level, it was building a communication satellite for launch in 2017 and establishing a ground station to provide data from Indian satellites for such purposes as disaster management, in which context it had also participated in several international mechanisms, including UN-SPIDER and Sentinel Asia.

59. In the area of capacity-building, the Indian Space Research Organization continued to share its facilities and expertise in the application of space science and technology, and thus far there had been some 1,600 beneficiaries in over 50 countries. In 2016, India had hosted a workshop on the use of Earth observation data in disaster management and risk reduction; a meeting of heads of more than 60 space agencies that had adopted the New Delhi Declaration on outer space and climate change; and a regional symposium on remote sensing. It was also currently working on a vision document focused on space applications, space infrastructure, space transportation and capacity-building as a part of India's ongoing endeavour to augment its space infrastructure and resources in order to provide enhanced social benefits to its citizens and humanity through space-based services.

60. **Mr. Leonidchenko** (Russian Federation), noting the positive progress achieved by COPUOS in connection with the UNISPACE+50 agenda and the draft Guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities, said that the Russian proposals concerning the text of the guidelines were indicative of his country's pragmatic and straightforward approach to regulating the safety of space operations, an objective vital to preventing situations of conflict, and one that should be pursued in a similar manner by other States. He cautioned against hasty and premature decision-making on matters relating to space traffic management, on which there was a huge body of research but no holistic consideration of the findings. The ideas impartially examined in the working paper submitted to COPUOS on the subject by the Russian Federation thus promised to provide some focus to the discussion, which should remain realistic and be based on a strategy for guaranteeing the safety of space operations in line with robust guidelines for their long-term sustainability. The inclusion of such concepts in the draft Guidelines would indicate the readiness of States, in conducting their respective space activities, to observe new safety and security criteria.

61. Realization of the Russian proposal to establish under United Nations auspices an information platform as an essential tool for guaranteeing the safety of operations in outer space would be a landmark achievement for numerous reasons, although certain security constraints would be unavoidable in relation to, for example, orbital information concerning objects engaged in tasks relating to national security. Such a platform would nonetheless provide opportunities for streamlining the verification and periodic updating of information in a manner that ensured its accuracy.

62. The sustainable safety of space operations was bound up with the level of independent decision-making by operators, taking into account their rights as well as the obligations of the States with jurisdiction

over the space objects concerned, both being relevant to decisions on mitigating potential danger in outer space. Worryingly, international space law was deemed inadequate in academic circles, while the inability to exclude the so-called "big-bang" approach to system reform also portended problems. For its part, the Russian Federation favoured a conservative, realistic and steady approach to space traffic management in which direct analogies with other areas of international law could be intelligently sought.

63. He pointed out linguistic anomalies and difficulties associated with the term "global space governance" that the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs might wish to consider, notably in order to preclude its use by any State as justification for the domination of space. He also expressed surprise at the reaction, whether indifferent, critical or neutral, to the Russian proposal that COPUOS should prioritize analysis of the legal basis and modalities for any resort to self-defence in outer space in the light of the Charter of the United Nations. COPUOS had remained conspicuously aloof on the matter, whereas the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research was busily engaged in addressing the topic in cooperation with the Secure World Foundation.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.